



**STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
TENNESSEE COUNCIL FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING**
WWW.STATE.TN.US/HUMANSERV/TCDHH.HTM
CITIZENS PLAZA STATE OFFICE BUILDING, 14TH FLOOR
400 DEADERICK STREET
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37243-6000
Telephone: (615) 313-4896 ♦ TTY: 1-800-270-1349 ♦ Fax: (615) 532-4685 FAX
E-Mail: **Thom.Roberts@tn.gov**

PHIL BREDESEN
Governor

VIRGINIA T. LODGE
Commissioner

**TCDHH COUNCIL MEETING
League for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing
Friday, May 14, 2010**

Members Present: Dana Hughes (Chair), Paulette Melton (Vice-Chair), Terry Smith, Thom Roberts (Executive Director), Lordy Smith, Kim Dance, Michael Friedman, and Steve Farmer (for Alan Mealka).

Members Not Present: Andrea Cooper (Assistant Commissioner), Alan Mealka, Lygia Williams, Margie Ulrich, Summer Chappell, Deborah Harris

Call to Order

At approximately 9:13 a.m. Dana Hughes, Chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed council members.

Dana Hughes and Thom Roberts attended the Town Hall meeting in Johnson City. There are concerns that the Deaf and Hard of Hearing don't have adequate access to services and assistance. They spoke with the Executive Director and offered suggestions for addressing these concerns.

The upcoming Town Hall meetings are scheduled as follows:

- Memphis – August 7, 2010
- Knoxville – November 20, 2010
- Jackson – January 8, 2011

Review of Minutes

The Council members were asked if they had reviewed the minutes from the previous meeting. Being confirmed, the Council was then asked to approve these minutes. If approved, minutes stand as the official record of the previous meeting on February 26, 2010.

- ✓ Individual Action: Motion made by Lordy Smith and seconded by Kim Dance for the minutes to stand as the official record of the previous meeting on February 26, 2010.
- ✓ Member Action: The Council voted verbally with all ayes, no nays.
Motion Carried.

Assistant Commissioner Report Terry Smith (proxy for Andrea Cooper)

- ❖ The Governors budget does not include any cuts for Vocational Rehabilitation.
- ❖ There are no cuts in our program budgets this year and we are waiting for the Office of Contract Review to return our contracts.
- ❖ There has been some reorganization in the state Vocational Rehabilitation office. Please welcome Gay Oliver, Director of Program Evaluation and Improvement, and congratulations to Tom Hannon who is now our Director of Vocational Rehabilitation.
- ❖ We continue to release clients from our PC1 caseload and expect to release clients every few months.
- ❖ We are in the process of installing a new paperless Case Management system. Full implementation is expected to be in July of 2011.
- ❖ The newest member of the State Rehabilitation Council is Sharon Bryant who is of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community in Chattanooga.

Special note from Lana Newton:

We had our first Deaf Blind camp in several years. We had several volunteers, a lot of students and a lot of support from locals. The camp was filled with excitement and was a big success.

Council Member Reports

➤ Lordy Smith –

- The Memphis chapter of the BDA (Black Deaf Advocates) continues to reach out to the youth in the area. We are planning to have a workshop by the end of the year.
- The Memphis chapter of TAD is making plans for the 2010 Deaf Expo in Memphis which will be on September 18th. We are in need of more sponsors, booths, and volunteers.
- The East Memphis Quota Club had their National Conference last week.

- **Kim Dance** -
 - TAD is gearing up for the Tennessee Deaf Expo which is to be held on September 18 in Memphis.
 - Recently TAD had a Support Service Providers Program workshop with Dana Hughes.
- **Michael Friedman** –
 - Chattanooga is holding a Deaf Chat meeting and Michael hopes to be able to attend. He will keep us information about that meeting.
- **Steve Farmer (Alan Mealka)** –
 - The old gymnasium at Tennessee School for the Deaf has been renovated and we will be rededicating the gym on homecoming on October 30th.
 - The TSD Run for the Deaf annual event was the best ever this year with 330 runners.
 - TSD had 19 seniors graduate this May.
 - Students from TSD took 4th place at the Academic Bowl which is held every year.
- **Paulette Melton** –
 - Paulette has written a letter requesting that policy be re-written for the food stamp medical deduction and will keep us updated on the outcome.
 - There are programs for food stamps and cash assistance for flood victims thru May 20th.
- **Lygia Williams (by Thom Roberts)** –
 - We have made some headway with the Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities. Lygia has written one of the strategic goals for this coming fiscal year which states that they will reach out to the Deaf community.
 - Lygia will be working with several people across the state to provide in-service training.

Executive Director's Report

March

11	TN Suicide Prevention Network (TSPN) Regional Meeting
14	Mockingbird Community and Retirement Center Annual Report Meeting
18	Emergency Preparedness Meeting – Taught some language & culture
19	Park Center South visit
25	Gate Communications visit
27	WellFEST – volunteered time

April

6	Early Awareness & Readiness Services (EARS) Meeting
8	TSPN Regional Monthly Meeting
9	Center Visits: Knoxville Center of the Deaf and Communication Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
10	TAD Board Meeting and Town Hall Meeting in Johnson City

May

- 11 “Healing the Hidden Wounds” Workshop at Fort Campbell (NAMI Event)
- 13 Tennessee Technical Assistance and Resources for Enhancing Deaf-Blind Supports (TREDs) Advisory Council

Various other meetings were attended such as: Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network (regional, intra-state departmental, and statewide meetings), Emergency Alert Equipment Distribution Action Committee (formal name yet to be decided), and other professional meetings where the Council was needed to fulfill our purpose statement.

Also your Executive Director provided information and referral to those who sought hearing aids, interpreter services, and advocacy.

Center Director Reports

- **CCDHH – Jessica Harrison** -
 - We continue to have ASL classes and members of the Deaf community are coming in and interacting with the class.
 - CCDHH continues to work with the local hospitals and doctor offices to ensure Deaf individuals receive appropriate services.
 - CCDHH is working with non-verbal mental health consumers to teach them sign language in order to communicate.
- **KCD – Bob Rittenhouse** -
 - Contingent on approval of the Governor, the VRI program will begin in June at U.T. Hospital.
 - As a result of the meeting on May 8, KCD will partner with Life Links, a national VRS provider.
 - KCD held their annual Deaf Youth Leadership party in April with 65 children in attendance.
 - Team Effort will be in Knoxville again this summer. They will be working in the homes of Deaf and Deaf-Blind individuals in the area.
- **JCIL – Amy Cone** –
 - JCIL had the local firefighters come out to our center and bring a truck and equipment and teach basic techniques and practical safety plans for fire safety.
 - In April we had a man from Regions Bank come in and give a presentation about finances and basic money management techniques.
 - We received stimulus money thru the Center for Independent Living and purchased new computers for the center.
- **Bridges – Sallie Hussey**-

- We have been selected as one of the 26 recipients of a new technology grant between HCA Foundation and Microsoft. We will receive new software, new desktop computers, two laptops, cloud computing (state of the art technology for the server), and a two year contract with two HCA technology specialists to install it and train the staff.
 - Eric Workman is not only working to secure both current contracts with business clients like Vanderbilt Medical Center and Middle Tennessee State, but also new clients like Nashville Auto Diesel College.
- **PFCA – Linda Lawson-**
 - The United Way presented a local client with the Alexis Detoqueville Courage Award. The young lady is the only deaf child from a family of 12 children.
 - Sharon Bryant met with senators Tracy, Watson and Crowe on Capitol Hill regarding the bill for mental health services for the Deaf.
- **Deaf Connect– Ron Aven-**
 - We have an opportunity in partnership with Memphis City Schools, Tennessee Early Intervention Service to start a new program called Deaf Family Literacy Academy. They want to expand the program to other communities in the Southeast. We've been chosen to actually be the first place outside of Florida to participate. We will be hiring deaf mentors who will be working with 25 families (hearing parents of deaf children) for a 38-week period, every week in their home. They will be teaching these parents how to sign, how to communicate with their children, and teaching them literacy techniques so they can help their children with reading and writing.

Old Business/New Business

- **Old:**
 - There will be a public hearing on June 3rd in Nashville to review the State Plan.
 - Lana Newton, Human Services Program Coordinator for Deaf-Blind Services will be presenting at Mega Conference.
- **New:**
 - We will be voting for Chair and Vice Chair at the next council meeting.
 - The newsletter will now only be produced semi-annually. If you have items you would like to include, please forward the information as soon as possible.
 - The next council meeting will be August 27, 2010.

Message from Sandy Cohen

Gallaudet is taking over \$2 million in cuts this year and as part of that they have laid off about 40 plus employees. The word is that the southeast regional center will merge into the Mid Atlantic center which is at Gallaudet University. The Center at Flagler College will close September 30, 2010.

I have been working with Tennessee School for the Deaf trying to develop an archive and the TSDAA the alumni association has also been involved with that, and we have just completed organizing all of the copies of all of the back issues of the Tennessee Observer.

We have, thanks to TSD, TSDAA and other donations, restored some oil paintings which include one of Mrs. Poore who was a past superintendent of the School for the Deaf.

Meeting Adjourned

Meeting was adjourned by Chair, Dana Hughes at 11:35 A.M.